

will make a tangible and permanent contribution to the bold reforms taking place in such countries as Armenia and Ukraine. In spite of this overall shift, U.S. aid to the states of Central and Eastern Europe continues to be reduced, requiring maximum efficiency in the use of U.S. foreign assistance. It is this objective that is embraced in legislation supported by our Coalition and rapidly moving towards enactment.

Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole (R-KS), Senator Paul Simon (D-IL), along with a bipartisan group of Senators including Chairman McConnell, will offer the humanitarian Aid Corridor Act (S. 230) on the Senate floor as an amendment to the Foreign Operations Appropriations bill (H.R. 1868). The 18 member organizations of the Central and East European Coalition strongly urge the Senate to take quick, decisive action—in support of the Dole/Simon amendment. This legislation espouses the fundamental principle that the United States should not provide assistance to any country which deliberately prevents the transport of American humanitarian assistance through its borders. The U.S. cannot expect to meet the need for budget austerity and achieve important foreign policy goals without the cooperation of our allies.

The relevant committees in the Senate and the House have fully debated the bill and expressed clear, bipartisan support. On May 12, the House International Relations Committee approved the Corridor Act by a 27-7 vote. On June 7, the same bill was again approved by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in a convincing 14-4 vote. To illustrate the genuine bipartisan nature of the bill, it was California Senator Dianne Feinstein who successfully offered Senator Dole's bill as an amendment before the Foreign Relations Committee. In addition, the Democrats on the Foreign Relations Committee voted unanimously for the Corridor Act. For the third time, the provision was approved by the House Foreign Operations Subcommittee on June 8, and retained in H.R. 1868 when it passed the House by a 333-89 vote.

Currently, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe are undergoing radical political and economic reforms to institutionalize democracy and free markets. The success of these reform programs will bring peace, security and stability to the region. The Coalition will continue to work toward securing the integration of our ancestral homelands into the western political, economic and defense structures. We oppose any obstacle or impediment to furthering this integration process and especially deplore the use of inhumane methods to prevent any nation of Central and Eastern Europe from having access to U.S. humanitarian aid. It simply does not make sense that the United States should provide aid to one nation which in turn denies U.S. humanitarian assistance to another state. We are firmly united in our view that U.S. assistance should be delivered in the most humane, cost-effective, fiscally responsible manner. This cannot be achieved when borders are closed to thwart U.S. assistance to people in need.

Senator Dole's amendment does not single out or exempt any country. All recipients of U.S. assistance will be held to the same standard, including such countries as Turkey, which has imposed an illegal and immoral blockade on Armenia since April of 1993. This blockade has resulted in slowing delivery of U.S. aid shipments while skyrocketing the transportation costs. Most importantly, the blockade has often precluded the safe delivery of vitally needed U.S. humanitarian assistance.

The Coalition believes that it is unconscionable for any recipient of U.S. aid to use the denial of food, medicines and other essential humanitarian needs as a political

weapon. The United States should demand that its allies maintain a simple, humane policy that allows U.S. assistance to flow through open corridors. As taxpayers, we are rightfully indignant that the U.S. government would provide hundreds of millions of dollars to a country denying aid to suffering people. There is no more cruel and cynical policy than a government directive to block humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable people for political or strategic ends. That any recipient of U.S. aid would do so is unacceptable to this Coalition.

We applaud Senators Dole and Simon for their leadership on this issue. The amendment is truly bipartisan, and a necessary element in strengthening American credibility abroad.

#### COALITION URGES REFORM OF U.S.A.I.D.

(Statement by Avo E. Ora, Director of Public Relations, Joint Baltic American National Committee)

Today, the Central and East European Coalition is united not only in our support for increasing foreign aid funding, we are also united in our demands for the effective use of these resources. Increased funding will not advance our national security interests nor Central and East European development if the funds continue to be wasted on short-term, less-than-efficient programs.

The end of the Cold War provided the US with the opportunity to reshape Europe as the Marshall plan reshaped war-ravaged Europe in 1947. America's present policy goals are similar to the goals outlined under the plan—we seek to facilitate and secure democratic and economic gains in post-Soviet nations, resulting in a stable and secure Europe.

Unfortunately, the US Agency for International Development did not seize this opportunity and conducted business as usual. Grants have generally shifted from Central America to Central Europe but continued to be implemented by generic developmental, fee-for-service contractors who generally lack interest, knowledge and long-term commitment to the region. Although some long-term, goal-specific USAID programs were successfully implemented, they were more an exception than the norm. The result is a characterization of US assistance as wasteful by Congress, the targeted states, and most damaging of all, by the American people.

How can we increase the sustainable development and effectiveness of foreign aid? The answer lies in our recommendations for the use of Region Specific Organizations in aid implementation and a more open and accountable grant procedure. These suggestions evolved from our efforts to guarantee the efficient and wise use of US taxpayer dollars.

Our first recommendation is the use of organizations that have historic ties and long-term commitments to the countries of Central Europe and the New Independent States. These Region Specific Organizations, including many in our ethnic communities, have high standards of professionalism, an intimate knowledge of the political, economic and social conditions in a given country, and language capabilities which others lack.

Our second recommendation calls for the public disclosure of specific tasks, goals, and funding levels of USAID contracts, insuring an open and fair process for awarding contracts and grants, and simplifying the contracting process to facilitate smaller Region Specific organizations. Recently, USAID's lack of planning and commitment became apparent when USAID attempted to unilaterally reduce funding for Armenia in fiscal year 1996. In addition, USAID failed to sub-

mit a strategy paper for public comment. We strongly recommend that USAID country strategy papers be subject to comment by the NGO and PVO community.

The Coalition contrasts the wasteful, region-wide spending practices of USAID, with the country specific contracting processes of the National Endowment for Democracy and the US Information Agency which result in much greater, quicker and more effective assistance to these countries. Moreover, these smaller agencies which have had and will continue to have a long-term commitment to democracy and free market reform in the region, have contracting processes which are "user friendly" to RSO's, such as those represented by the coalition.

Aid for Central Europe and the New Independent States were designed to be temporary. This finite time frame for assistance only increases our desire for effective programs. Estonia is already slated for USAID "graduation" in 1996—other nations are on the chopping bloc for 1997. While we agree that US assistance should promote self-sufficiency and not dependency, this goal is not being pursued by government programs before or after "graduation". Estonia, for example, called for "trade, not aid" but now finds itself locked out of scientific and technical exchanges that would facilitate economic development.

The United States has long-term strategic interests and needs in the region of Central and East Europe. Thus, it is vitally important that all US assistance programs be designed and implemented in such a fashion as to further those strategic interests and needs. We echo the calls to reform foreign aid made by Chairman McConnell and his Committee. After three years of the Administration's failure to address these problems, the Coalition calls on Congress to take the lead in a top-to-bottom reform of USAID.

**THE PRESIDING OFFICER.** The Chair recognizes the Senator from Vermont.

**Mr. LEAHY.** I yield to the Senator from Arkansas who wishes to make a unanimous-consent request.

**THE PRESIDING OFFICER.** The Chair recognizes the Senator from Arkansas.

#### HELEN McLARTY

**Mr. PRYOR.** Mr. President, I would like my colleagues to know at this time that over the weekend the mother of our friend Mack McLarty, who is the former White House Chief of Staff and who is the special counsel to the President—Mack McLarty's mother, Helen McLarty, lost a long battle with cancer over the weekend. She was a wonderful woman, a great citizen of our State.

I had the privilege, when I was Governor of our State, of naming Helen McLarty to become the first female member of the Arkansas Industrial Development Commission. She served with honor and with distinction. She will be missed by all, and her legacy will last for a long time—remembering this wonderful woman of great spirit, from Hope, AR.

The services for Helen McLarty will be this afternoon at 2 o'clock in Hope, AR., at the First Presbyterian Church. I am honored to have been asked by the family to participate in those final services for Helen McLarty.